



October 27, 2021

Dr. Ronnie W. Floyd, President
SBC Executive Committee
901 Commerce Street
Nashville, TN 37203

Dear Dr. Floyd:

It is with enormous frustration and regret that I hereby submit to you my resignation from the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention. I am one of at least 14 EC members to do so thus far, as well as multiple officers, staff members (including yourself), and our legal counsel of 56 years. There will be more.

I have strongly resisted this decision over the last few weeks, but it is now forced upon me by legal counsel for several of the nonprofit and for-profit entities on whose boards I serve. It is their strongly worded counsel that the legal ramifications of my continuance on a board which has deliberately chosen to breach its legal and fiduciary duties poses an unacceptable risk to those entities which they and I serve.

I support the investigation, for the reasons you stated prior to the Annual Meeting. It is necessary to find any wrongdoing that may have occurred, as well as to clear the names of the innocent.

But I also wish to make clear, as I have done in open and executive sessions, the needless foolishness of the specific course chosen. As we were advised by counsel, the Executive Committee had multiple paths by which it could comply with the will of the messengers while also fulfilling its legal obligations. The “either-or” presented to us was political, not real.

Worse still is that the messengers were deceived. They were told that attorney-client privilege exists to hide wrongdoing, which is manifestly false and subversive of due process. They were told that a blanket waiver of that privilege was a “best practice”, when it is no such thing: the Department of Justice’s most recent guidelines prohibit U.S. Attorneys from even requesting privilege be waived.

In fact, even Guidepost Solutions’ other clients do not normally waive, as their representative admitted. The messengers were led to believe that waiver is perfectly normal and necessary, and yet eight separate lawyers advised us that, as former U.S. Attorney Paul Coggins put it, “waiver is not a ‘best practice’, it’s not a standard practice: it’s malpractice.”

Even as we speak, Al Mohler – whose seminary is the locus of the two most visible cases of alleged sex abuse, those of Jennifer Lyell and Hannah Kate Williams – has employed Guidepost, but has not waived privilege. No one bats an eye.

By contrast, the messengers were *not* told – as we were, unanimously, by eight separate lawyers – that waiver of privilege in the form demanded would void the Executive Committee’s insurance. The messengers were *not* told that it would render the SBC itself “uninsurable”. The messengers were *certainly* not told that losing our insurance would gravely limit our ability to compensate any victims the investigation might find.

The messengers were *not* told that virtually all of the EC's professional people and many of its pastors would have to resign from the EC if this measure was adopted. The messengers were *not* told why: that both the EC as a whole and all of its individual members have very specific legal duties which cannot be waived, that a blanket waiver of privilege breached those duties in multiple ways, and that none of it can be undone. As one pastor put it, "once waived, always waived."

These are technical matters of great legal consequence. The Convention leadership knew they were coming. Yet while they arranged to have an attorney on hand to "inform" the messengers of their opinion (contradicted by Robert's Rules of Order) that Tom Ascol's motion to rescind Resolution 9 might (I stress "might") violate *procedure*, they did *nothing* to provide the messengers with legal counsel as to the unintended consequences of an act that in many respects violates the *law*. They chose not to allow the messengers the slightest chance to make an informed decision.

They knew they would pay no price. But other, innocent people surely will pay that price, as plaintiffs' lawyers with dishonest agendas use the EC's uninsurability to bankrupt impoverished members and staff with legal fees, to compel false yet sworn testimony of hierarchicalism, all to steal billions of widows' mites from our seminaries, missionaries and children's homes.

And it all began with one man's political agenda, Russell Moore, a mandatory reporter who claims to have known of children being raped for twenty long months, who still hasn't notified law enforcement of a single name. ERLC trustee Jonathan Whitehead's whistleblower letter tells the whole sad story. Like so many disgruntled employees before him, Russell chose to burn down the house on his way out the door (to join the pastoral staff of a paedobaptist church, no less), and his allies were all too happy to help him.

An investigation is necessary. But a serious investigation should ask why, if Russell's allegations are true, he has covered them up for nearly two years.

It is the Executive Committee's duty, as the Convention's fiduciary, to ensure we do not burn down the village to save it. This is precisely why we have a trustee system: to carefully weigh in detail that which cannot even be meaningfully discussed in just a few minutes once a year. In this, the Executive Committee has absolutely failed.

The SBC is in grave danger. We will have to do Herculean things to save it. And we must: we educate a third of the seminary students in America and field the largest missionary force in the world. We cannot allow this enormous force for good to be destroyed, whether by vile, wicked sex abusers who've violated the ultimate trust, *or* by foolish, self-serving leaders who've exposed the church to needless danger. We can punish the guilty while saving our churches and our Convention. We must.

I am entirely committed to our SBC. I will stand in that fight as long as the Lord allows. Just not, for now, as a member of the Executive Committee.

Sincerely submitted,



Rod D. Martin
Member for Florida